

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicant has carefully studied the outstanding Official Action mailed on October 20, 2006. This response is intended to be fully responsive to all points of rejection raised by the Examiner and is believed to place the application in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the application are respectfully requested.

The drawings stand objected due to being what the Examiner calls informal. The PTO-948 form says the lines, numbers and letters are not uniformly thick and well defined. Applicant respectfully disagrees. The drawings Applicant has filed are computer drawn and clear. Applicant has re-submitted the drawings – perhaps there was some uncleanness in the originally filed drawings due to a transmission fault.

Claim 1 stands objected due to an informality. This has been corrected by incorporating the Examiner's suggested amendment.

Claims 1-4 and 7-10 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Garber (US 5725587).

Claims 11-13 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Garber.

Claims 5-6 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Garber in view of Dunlap et al (US 5167968).

Claims 1-4 and 7-13 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Garber in view of Schuessler (US 2003/0018387).

Claims 5-6 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Garber in view of Schuessler and further in view of Dunlap et al. It is noted that Examiner is correct in stating that Garber does not have a seamless articulating surface.

Although Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections, for the purposes of expedited allowance, claim 1 has been amended to particularly recite the structure shown in Fig. 4 as described on pages 9-10, which structure is not found in any of the prior art. It is noted that even if Garber is combined with Schuessler, the combination does not result in an elastomeric covering which is invertible. New dependent claims 22-25 have been added, which are also deemed allowable. Claims 2, 3, 5 and 7-21 are cancelled. It is respectfully submitted that claims 1, 4, 6 and 22-25 are deemed allowable.

Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,

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